



Velo--2nd Gear: Bicycle Culture and Style

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Choosing a particular bicycle conveys an attitude and a way of life. For a young generation, bicycles have now replaced cars as the vehicles that best express its identity and this book shows why. Riding a bike is easy. Once someone can do it, they will never forget how. Riding a bike can be addictive--in the best cases for life. Understanding the subtleties of contemporary bicycle culture can be challenging. Like it or not, choosing to ride a particular bike--whether an old-fashioned city bicycle, a high-tech machine, a mountain bike, a touring bike, a fixie, or a beach cruiser--means being associated with a certain lifestyle. Velo--2nd Gear explores these diverse bicycle scenes and reveals their histories, relationships, and insightful details. Alongside its presentation of especially attractive and unusual bicycles, the book documents how riders' accessories and styles vary just as widely as the bikes' tires and other equipment. It explains how each scene cultivates its own distinct codes through the choice of certain jerseys, caps, or bags or by visiting specific events or key establishments. The examples in Velo--2nd Gear span the globe. Tours in traditional costumes and on historical paths in Belgium or Italy are not only appealing as athletic challenges, but also as adventures for cosmopolitan travelers. In urban centers at night, bicycle messengers hold races on city streets. Specialized bike boutiques focus on details such as customized paint jobs. Frame builders in Oregon, Paris, or southern Germany create highly coveted bikes tailored to individuals or in very limited editions with long waiting lists. Velo--2nd Gear makes abundantly clear that contemporary bicycle culture is more alive and well than ever before. The book celebrates its healthy, environmentally-friendly, discerning, and slightly obsessive scenes and their protagonists. It shows why, for a young generation, bicycles have now replaced cars as the vehicles that best express its identity.

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Dorothy Shuler:

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David Unruh:

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Allison Lyon:

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